

AIMS UPDATE FOR TEST COORDINATORS

Arizona Department of Education (ADE)

Standards and Assessment Section

<http://www.ade.az.gov/standards>

September 2003

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We recommend that recipients of the AIMS Update communicate the information to superintendents, charter holders, principals, school test coordinators, teachers, special education directors, curriculum directors, counselors, assistant principals, students, and parents.

STATE TESTING SCHEDULE **SCHOOL YEAR 2003-2004**

Stanford 9 – Grades 2 – 9

Administration dates:

March 15 – May 1, 2004

AIMS – Grades 3, 5, 8, and 10

Census field test of writing prompts:

Administration dates: October 6-10, 2003

AIMS – Grades 3, 5, and 8 (operational); and
Grades 4, 6, 7 (field test)

Administration dates:

April 19 – April 30, 2004

AIMS – High School: All grade 10 students,
and all grade 11 and 12 students who have not
yet achieved “Meets Standard” or “Exceeds
the Standard” in reading, writing, or
mathematics will be tested.

Administration dates:

Reading—February 24, 2004

Writing—February 25, 2004

MAKE-UP:

Reading—March 2, 2004

Writing—March 3, 2004

Inter-session **MAKE-UP:**

Reading—February 26, 2004

Writing—February 27, 2004

Mathematics administration dates:

April 22, 2004

MAKE-UP: April 26, 2004

AIMS AND STANFORD 9 **INFORMATION**

If you did not receive the August AIMS UPDATE or a copy of the current State Testing Critical Dates Calendar, you can find both at: www.ade.az.gov/standards

OUT-OF-LEVEL TESTING

At this time there is no out-of-level testing on AIMS. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act has prohibited the use of out-of-level testing of students. Superintendent Horne has sent a request to the federal Department of Education for an amendment to our state NCLB Accountability Workbook, permitting out-of-level testing.

Since SAT 9 is not part of the No Child Left Behind Act, ADE had determined that out-of-level testing is an option on the Stanford 9.

Please read the attached letter that was sent to Special Education Directors on Monday, September 8, 2003.

FIELD TEST MATERIAL DELIVERY

The writing field test materials will be delivered to the districts the week of September 22-26, 2003. You do not need to order the materials from Harcourt. They will determine the shipping amount based on last year's student count. If you had 100 third grade students last year, you will receive 100 writing prompts in September, plus a 10% overage.

OCTOBER AIMS FIELD TEST **DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING**

The AIMS Field Test Directions for Administering can be found on the ADE web site at: <http://www.ade.az.gov/standards/aims>

OCTOBER AIMS FIELD TEST CHANGE IN PROCEDURE

There has been a change in procedure for the writing prompt that is not contained in the directions. Students can write their draft on a separate piece of paper(s) so they can copy without flipping the pages. All drafts must be picked up, bundled in school/grade level groups, and sent to Harcourt, along with the answer document. Students may not take the drafts from the test site. We hope this change in procedure will make the test a better indicator of a student's writing skills.

OCTOBER AIMS FIELD TEST OF WRITING PROMPTS

Schools in session during the testing window for the **October AIMS Field Test of Writing Prompts** will be required to give this assessment. Schools on inter-session at that time are exempt. If you receive materials and are on inter-session, return the materials to Harcourt.

Testing Information:

- The test can be administered any day during the testing window, but the entire administration must occur on the same day.
- You should plan for the same amount of time that you have used on previous AIMS writing prompt assessments. Generally, this has been more than a single language class in middle school and high school. The AIMS is not timed and students are to have significant time to complete the prompt.
- There will be no make-up test.
- Special Education students who are tested will participate on a level with appropriate IEP accommodations.
- The field test will contain only a writing prompt and no multiple-choice items.

Since this is a field test, no reports will be generated, and scores will not be sent; however, students don't need to know details on this because we want them to do their very best even though it is a field test.

TEST PREPARATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION PRACTICES

Please review with your building administrators and teachers the document, *Test Preparation and Administration Practices*, that was approved by the state Board of Education, January 27, 2003.

With the recent "news" about AIMS, some concerns have been expressed that not everyone is aware of the guidelines presented in the Board document. The same guidelines should be used in the administration of the October Field Test. In general, the best preparation for AIMS is good instruction based on the Arizona Standards.

PRE-ID LABELS FOR OCTOBER FIELD TEST

You do not need to deliver pre-ID files to Harcourt in September. This is a change in the information contained on the Critical Dates Calendar for 2003-2004.

The AIMS Field Test for writing will be delivered to you in bundles that can be distributed to the schools and grade levels. Harcourt will have distributed the different prompts in the bundles. The administration guide will be included.

We anticipated using the Fall Writing Field Test as a pilot for using SAIS; however, the system will not be used for the labels for the fall field test. Therefore, the field test answer documents do not need to have pre-ID labels attached. It will be significant data if the student completes the demographic sheet as instructed in the guide.

If a district wants to print ID labels for the teacher or building test coordinator to use, it may do so. Since the labels will not be scanned, Harcourt must be able to read the demographic information on the label and/or the demographic sheet to hand enter the data. It is very important that information be in the same order as it is on the demographic sheet (student name, teacher, school, district, gender, grade, date of birth, special program membership, level of English proficiency, and disabilities.)

WHAT IS A SCALE SCORE?

The AIMS raw scores are converted to scale scores because scale scores are needed for mathematical and statistical procedures. A raw score is simply the total number of points a student obtains on a test. Raw scores are typically transformed into scaled scores using a statistical technique called Item Response Theory (IRT).

Scale scores allow student achievement on different test levels to be placed on a common scale. This is how the Stanford 9 works. For example, a student who obtains a high percentage correct on a lower grade test will have approximately the same scale score as a student would get by obtaining a low percentage correct on a higher grade level test. Typically, a student's scale score will increase each year.

For AIMS there is a separate scale for each grade level, and they are not linked across grade levels like the Stanford 9. However, the scale score for AIMS is the best score to use to measure gains and growth. On AIMS, at each grade level, a scale score of 500 is required to *Meet the Standard*.

RUMOR CONTROL

It has come to our attention that a company presenting workshops is reporting that we will not be giving Stanford 9 or Stanford 10. There has not been a decision

made by the state on which standardized norm-referenced assessment will be given beyond 2004, but it is required by state law that we administer a nationally standardized norm-referenced assessment. There will be a formal bid process followed to select the assessment for Arizona students.

Presenters are also stating that we are moving to more short-response questions with fewer multiple-choice questions on AIMS. This is a false statement. We are going to all multiple-choice questions on mathematics and reading and one extended writing prompt for writing.

It was also rumored that state testing would extend down to first grade. There is no plan to expand state testing to first grade.

GENRE FOR AIMS WRITING PROMPT

Students will be asked to write in one of the following genres for the October Field Test of Writing Prompts and for the Spring Field Test for 4, 6, and 7. Each grade level has specific writing modes that are addressed in the standard that should be used for instruction, but only the listed writing modes have been selected for assessment. After the prompts are evaluated for inclusion in the operational AIMS, a new list will be published if there are any changes.

GENRE FOR ARIZONA AIMS FIELD TEST WRITING PROMPT

Writing Mode	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 10
Personal Experience Narrative	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Creative Story	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Friendly OR Personal Letter	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Expository Essay			X	X	X	X	X
Business Letter			X	X	X	X	X
Persuasive Essay					X	X	X
Letter of Application							X

TEST COORDINATORS E-MAIL LIST

The Academic Standards and Assessment Section maintains an e-mail list of **district and charter holder test coordinators** to allow us to quickly communicate vital information. If you are new and not on the list, please allow us to communicate with you by e-mail by contacting Angeles Rothermel at arother@ade.az.gov Provide your district or charter affiliation, your name, your position, your phone and fax numbers, and your current e-mail address.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How long will the AIMS field test take?

A: You should base your testing plan on your past experience with AIMS writing prompts. If you planned two hours for writing last spring, plan two hours for the field test.

Q: Can the field test be given just within English class structures without altering entire school schedule?

A: The test is to be administered in a single day, in one setting. It is not timed. One class period may not be sufficient time for students to complete the writing assessment. This test is not timed.

Q: Will the scores be reported back to us?

A: No, the writing samples will be evaluated for inclusion in future AIMS.

Q: When will the new student guides be available?

A: They will be available in December, 2003 or early January, 2004.

Q: Do I need to order the field test materials?

A: You do not need to order the materials for the October Field Test. Harcourt will send the materials to you based on last year's enrollment figures.

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